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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5761

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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/WHA, DS/IP/ITA, DS/CC, WHA/EX AND BL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [AEMR](#) [AMGT](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: EAC MEETING - LA PAZ

REF: A) 07 La Paz 3077 B) 07 La Paz 3078

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED (SBU) - PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

¶1. (SBU) During severe civil unrest over the weekend in the city of Sucre (due to constitutional issues), several Bolivians were killed and hundreds wounded. By late afternoon, Bolivian National Police (BNP) had abandoned the city and local prisoners had escaped from nearby prisons. A 'warden message' was released late Sunday afternoon advising all US citizens to take precaution, seek safety off the streets and to avoid Sucre all together. On Saturday, there were 20 Peace Corps volunteers in Sucre for the Thanksgiving weekend. Thirteen (13) were safely evacuated, but seven (7) remained behind, having declined to be evacuated. However, all are safe and accounted for. The situation in Sucre is quiet for now, but tensions are high.

¶2. (SBU) On Monday morning, 11/26/2007, RSO La Paz learned from police contacts that a rally/manifestation (approximately 2,000) from the area known as El Alto, was to be led by President Evo Morales himself to the Congress (central La Paz) as a 'show of force' to force the Congress to accept a new pension plan and the new constitution approved in draft ("en grande") over the weekend in Sucre (Reftel B). As the procession descended down from El Alto and arrived in central La Paz at approximately 11:00, supporters throughout La Paz joined the rally/manifestation. The crowd was estimated to be approximately 8,000. One group of supporters, approximately 1,000, peacefully proceeded past the US embassy to join the rally. The rally/manifestation ended late in the afternoon with no incidents reported. There were no anti-US rhetoric or accusations made against the US embassy. BNP provided security for the Congress and nearby Palace. There were no opposition protests, nor were there any military presence to be found.

¶3. (SBU) In addition to the 'warden message' released Sunday afternoon, Post is scheduling a "Town Hall" meeting for Post personnel Wednesday afternoon, 11/28/2007 to discuss security arrangements and emergency planning preparations. The US Department of State issued a statement deploring the violence in Sucre late on November 26; the UN, the OAS, the European Union and Spain also issued statements, reducing prospects that the Embassy will be targeted by government supporters in retaliation.

¶4. (U) POC is RSO Patrick J. Moore; IVG 547-8903; e-mail: moorepj@state.gov). Regards.

GOLDBERG